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ABSTRACT

This presentation at a seminar for library staff and students describes the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system as an information system designed to provide users with ready access to primarily English-language literature dealing with education by establishing a database, publishing abstracting journals, and reproducing documents in printed and/or microfiche formats. The document includes a description of the organizational composition of ERIC; information on searching ERIC both manually and online; a brief discussion of search strategy development; a description of the format of the two printed abstracting journals, Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE) and Resources in Education (RIE); estimated costs of computer searches; and procedures for requesting an online search at the Institute of Education Library (IE), Singapore. A brief summary of the results of pre- and post-seminar questionnaires administered to 50 staff and student participants in the staff interaction seminar concludes this document. Appendices include a list of the 16 ERIC clearinghouses with their two letter codes; a sample online search strategy; sample online output; and copies of the pre- and post-seminar questionnaires with tabulated results. (THC)

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"ERIC : Online, Offline & Without line"

a summary and a report on the Staff Interaction Seminar on 18th Jan. 1986

by

Ho Soo Miang, Assistant Librarian,
Reference Library

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1. What is ERIC

The word "ERIC" in IE has more than one meaning. Well, most of us know who 'ERIC', the friendly Plant is in our campus, and we must have treasured his presence now especially as all the lovely old trees have vanished since the last vacation. Nevertheless, I must apologize as I do not know our Dr Eric Plant well enough to make him a subject for our Staff Interaction Seminar.

The 'ERIC' in the title refers to something more familiar to librarians - the ERIC database and the ERIC publications which IE librarians have to interact and react with nearly every day.

"ERIC" as an acronym stands for Education Resource Information Centre. It is an information system that has been in existence since 1966 and is currently sponsored by the National Institute of Education within the U.S. Dept. of Education.

ERIC is designed to provide users with ready access to primarily the English-language literature dealing with education. It does this by establishing a database, publishing abstracting journals, and reproducing documents in printed form or in microfiche format.

Organizationally, ERIC consists of the following:

1.1 A Central Government Office - sets policy, provides funding, and monitors the entire system.

1.2 16 subject-specialized "Clearinghouses" (see appendix I) : collect and analyze the literature, and produce the required information.

1.3 Central editorial and computer facility - maintains the database and prepares the abstracting journal Resources in Education (RIE) and Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE) among others.

1.4 ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) - prepares microfiche and document reproductions.

../2

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2. ERIC : Online Retrieval

The ERIC database (both RIE and CIJE) can be searched online by computer via major vendors of online retrieval services, eg. Dialog Information Services, Bibliographic Retrieval Services (BRS) and System Development Corporation (SDC).

At present, IE Library uses Dialog Information Services to access the ERIC database online through an IBM PC housed in the Chief Librarian's Office.

ERIC was one of the very first bibliographic databases to take advantage of the computer technology and that is why it is named file no. 1 in the Dialog system, which holds over 200 other databases on various subjects.

ERIC online retrieval has been available through IE Library since Aug. 1984. Before the Library purchased the IBM PC in May 1985, all the searchers were conducted through SISIR (Singapore Institute of Standards & Industrial Research). Now the online search can be done more easily and more economically using our IBM PC which is linked to the Dialog Database via a telephone line.

At time of this Seminar, a total of 70 searches have been done of which 43 were conducted via the IBM PC in the Library.

The full configurations of the PC, which serves as an online retrieval terminal, include a PC with keyboard, a monitor, a printer, a modem which codes and decodes the analogue signals to digital signals that the computer can interpret and process, and a telephone line which transmits the data to and fro across the Pacific Ocean.

A Software is used to facilitate communications and store search strategies and results so that the cost of searches can be cut down considerably.

The advantage of the computer search is that you can use any keywords and combine them in any way you wish. You can search words anywhere : in the Descriptors (ie. subject heading), titles, abstracts or publisher etc., whereas a manual search using the printed tool can only search one descriptor, one author, or one journal title at any one time, and combination of terms is not possible.

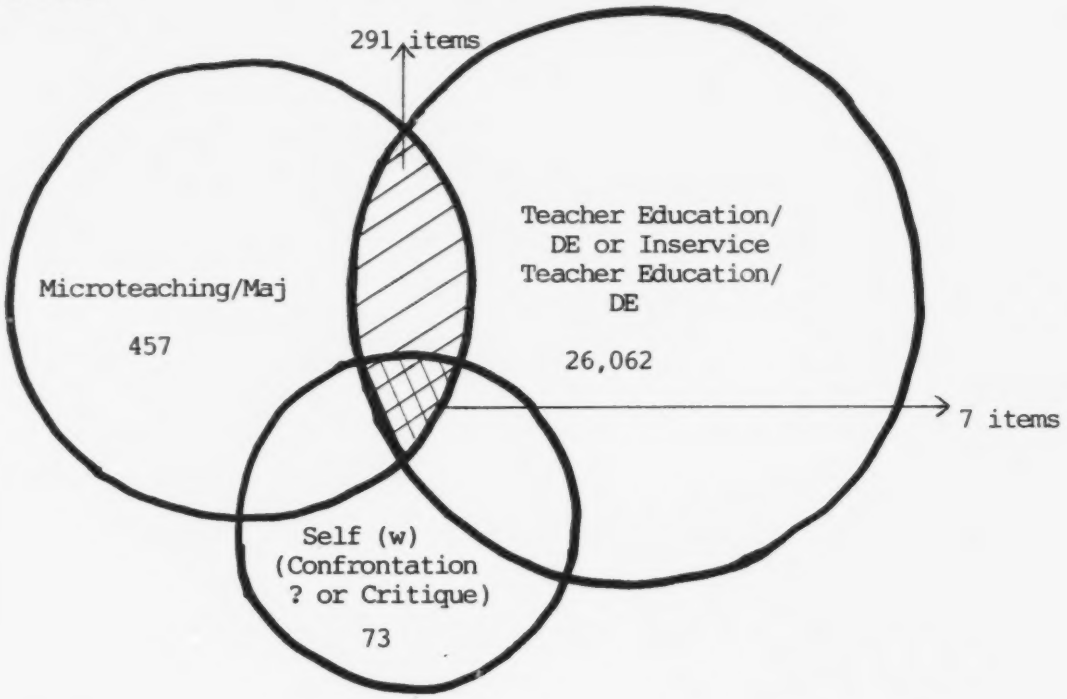
The example of the online search on materials on and about Singapore (Appendix II) illustrates the benefits of the online search in detail. As Singapore is not a descriptor in the ERIC system, one has no way of locating the documents related to the our country unless we literally go through all the items indexed in the printed tools, and it will take weeks or months before all of the items can be identified. Using the computer, the results can be known within a few seconds or at the most, a few minutes. The only thing to be careful about when doing an online search is to be accurate in the keypunching, otherwise one may get nothing (eg. Singaproe or Singapor yields no documents).

../3

The example of the second search on Microteaching (See Appendix III) illustrates the versatility of a computer search in combining keywords/terms and retrieving relevant items on a specific subject.

Using Microteaching/Maj retrieves all the items in which microteaching is dealt with as a major subject in the document. The second step is to search for Teacher Education or Inservice Teacher Education as descriptors and combine it with microteaching, and get the intersection. At this stage, the requestor wants to restrict the search to a narrower field ie. only the Self Confrontation/Critique aspect. The results of the search show only 7 items which consist of the 3 elements, although 73 items have Self Confrontation/Critique as a keyword.

The following diagram shows the concept of the search in details:



The other advantage of the online search is that one can narrow or broaden the search at any time, eg. after viewing the 7 items of the last combination, one can request for a broader combination say, only Microteaching with Teacher Education or Inservice Teacher Education, (ie. leaving out "Self-Confrontation/ Critique) and this would give 291 items.

../4

3. Offline : Why we need it

Requestors of online searches always find it confusing when the word offline is used. One always argues why we have to spend a few days waiting for offline print-outs while online print-outs can be obtained instantly.

The question can be easily answered by another question - Why do people still prefer writing letters to friends/organisations overseas, even though a trunk call is quicker.

Online searches are rather costly in this region as compared to those in the U.S.A. because we have to pay for additional telecommunication charges, which are similar to trunk calls on top of the database charges. Telepac, offered by Telecom, has brought down the cost considerably but it still costs S$2.00+ per minute. From our experience, loading the full records of the retrieved items online can cost 4 times as much as ordering them and then having them sent by airmail. Since the Research Fund for online bibliographic searches is limited, the best and the most cost effective way of using it for online searches is searching the database for keywords and combining them online, getting the number of retrieved items instantly, browsing through a few titles to decide its relevance and printing all the full records (full citation with abstracts) offline. The offline print, sent via Skypac normally arrives within ten days or 2 weeks after the search has been conducted. Sometimes, it can be as fast as five days if the processing is not interrupted by the weekends.

4. "Without line" : the manual search

ERIC publishes two printed abstracting journals regularly to facilitate manual searches. They are the CIJE (Current Index to Journals in Education) which covers only Journal articles and RIE (Resources In Education) which encompasses the rest of the educational documents other than journals.

CIJE is a monthly journal with half-yearly accumulations. It indexes articles published in approximately 780 major educational and education-related journals.

RIE is also a monthly journal, but cumulated annually. It covers research reports, conference proceedings, curriculum and instructional materials, monographs, dissertations and other fugitive materials.

Organizationally, the CIJE and RIE are made up of resumes and indexes. The resumes provide descriptions of each document and abstracts of their contents.

Resumes appear in a "Main Entry Section" (CIJE) or "Document Section" (RIE) and are numbered sequentially by an accession number beginning with the prefix EJ (Educational Journal) in CIJE or ED (ERIC Document) in RIE.

../5

The indexes appear in an "Index Section" and provides access to the resumes by Subject, Personal Author, Institution and Journal Contents Index or Publication Type.

To start a subject search, it would be helpful if one uses the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors to translate the search topic into ERIC descriptor/s.

As the Thesaurus provides Scope Notes (SN), Broader Terms (BT), Narrower Terms (NT) and Related Terms (RT) for each descriptor, one can easily define, widen or narrow one's search by selecting different descriptors and looking it up in CIJE or RIE for the references that suit one's requirement.

The Author Index groups all the publications under the same author together and makes the identification of one's work easy. For CIJE, a Cumulated Author Index (1969-1984) is available and it facilitates a quick and easy search for any author's work indexed in CIJE within that fifteen year span (otherwise, one has to go through all the 30 vols of half-yearly cumulations to gather all the references).

In addition to the subject and author searches, CIJE provides a Journal Contents Index and RIE makes available separate indexes for Institution and Publication Type. This helps to increase the access points of the indexed item and offers alternatives in manual searches.

5. The Cost of the Computer Search

The cost for each computer search consists of two components:

5.1 Database charges for online connect time and offline print.

5.2 Telecommunication charges.

ERIC database charges US$0.42 (S$1.00) per minute and US$0.10 (S$0.22) per record on offline print.

On the average, a 20 minute search on ERIC with 100 records on offline print-out costs about S$82.00.

The search on Singapore (App. II) with 239 records printed offline costs S$120.

The search on Microteaching (App. III) with 40 records printed offline costs S$30.

In general, the cost of a computer search largely depends on the two variable, i.e. the time connected online and the number of records we want to print out. From the 70 searches that we have conducted, the cost ranged from S$30 to S$300+. It is just like shopping or marketing, the more we buy, the more we have to pay.

../6

6. How to apply for online search?

All the IE Academic Staff are entitled to free online searches on the topic that are relevant to their teaching and research in IE. For the postgraduate student, a sum of S$200 is allocated to each M.Ed student for online searches.

Request forms for Online searches are available from the Information Desk (Mrs Lee) or Reference Library (Miss Ho).

Approval for the search from the immediate superior i.e. Head of School/Dept. or Thesis Supervisor is required.

Once the request form is received by the library, the librarian will plan and pre-store the search strategy and inform the requestor the time/date for the online search.

From our experience, the result of the online search is normally more satisfactory and cost-effective when the requestor sits with the Librarian at the terminal. As the search can be broadened or narrowed there and then according to the precise requirement of the requestor.

After the search is conducted, the requestor will be given the Online/Offline print-out for temporary reference. A search appraisal form would be used to evaluate the search result.

Note : All the print-outs and the appraisal forms are to be returned to Reference Library.

7. Where the online search print-out are housed?

The reference library indexes all the online searches and makes them available for any library user who is interested in the same topic.

The index and the online print-outs are housed in the Reference Library. A subject index to the Online searches is published in Lop-Lop 25 and new searches that are added to the collection will be announced in the forthcoming issue.

If you want to know which are the 70 searches that are available in IE Library, just call at the Reference Library.

8. The results of the Interaction Seminar

This seminar on ERIC was the first talk which highlighted the online and manual search facility available in IE Library.

A total of 50 staff/students were present.

../7

From the Pre-test (Quiz No. 1) results, one can see that most of the IE academic (87%) knew ERIC as an information system though more than half (56%) did not know ERIC can be accessed via computer. 41% had used ERIC for manual search whereas only 15% had done the searches online.

In general, 77% would like to do computer searches if it is free of charge, but 93% would not mind paying if it costs not more than S$50.00.

The result of the Post-Test (Quiz No.2) after the talk was very encouraging. As the test was conducted around 12.40 p.m. and most of the audience had left for the input to the stomach (Lunch), only a total of 15 staff/students completed the quiz.

Generally speaking, all of them had faith in computer search (67% thought it was reliable and 33% thought it was very reliable), and most of them (67%) were willing to pay for the service (as compared to only 23% in Quiz No. 1) though they still felt that computer searches were costly.

On the whole, the experience and the outcome of this staff interaction was very positive and enriching.

80% (Quiz No.2) of the audience predicted that they would use ERIC via computer at least one to three times in the coming twelve months. So, the IE Library looks forward to receiving your online requests in the near future.

../8

Appendix I

The 16 ERIC CLEARINGHOUSES

CE - Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

CG - Counselling and Personnel Services

CS - Reading and Communication Skills

EA - Educational Management

EC - Handicapped and Gifted Children

FL - Languages and Linguistics

HE - Higher Education

JC - Junior Colleges

PS - Elementary and Early Childhood Education

RC - Rural Education and Small Schools

SE - Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education

SO - Social Studies/Social Science Education

SP - Teacher Education

TM - Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation

UD - Urban Education

../9

Appendix II

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File 1:ERIC - 66-85/APR

     Set     Items    Description

?S SINGAPROE

     S1          0      S SINGAPROE

?S SINGAPOR

     S2          0      SINGAPOR

?S SINGAPORE

     S3        239      SINGAPORE

?PRINT 3/5/1-239

POO1: PRINT 3/5/1-239 est. cost of $23.90

?LOGOFF

       21may85 02:25:09 User078282
    $9.38    0.375 Hrs File1
          $23.90    239 Prints in format 5
   $23.90  1 Print transaction(s)
   $33.28  Estimated cost this file
Logoff: level 4.4.14   02:25:14


CLR PAD

** EXIT **
```

../10

Appendix III

File 1:ERIC - 66-85/JUN

```
      Set   Items   Description

? S MICROTEACHING/MAJ

      S1      457   MICROTEACHING/MAJ  (METHOD OF TEACHER TRAINING IN
                    WHICH SIMULATE...)
? SS TEACHER EDUCATION/DE OR INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION/DE
      S2    18535   TEACHER EDUCATION/DE
      S3     9200   INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION/DE
      S4    26062   TEACHER EDUCATION/DE OR INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION/DE
?C 11* 4
              457   1
            26062   4
      S5      291   1  *  4
? S SELF (W) (CONFRONTATION? OR CRITIQUE)
            40664   SELF
              714   CONFRONTATION?
             1942   CRITIQUE
      S6       73   SELF  (W)  (CONFRONTATION? OR CRITIQUE)
?C 5*6
              291   5
               73   6
      S7        7   5*6
?T 7/6/1-7


 7/6/1
EJ139647     IR503405
  Preparing Tutors for Microteaching Supervision


 7/6/2
ED121707     SP009848
  Self-Confrontation in Teacher Training: Student Teachers Assess Their
Own Video-Tape Micro-Lessons - A Follow-Up Study.  No. 50.


 7/6/3
ED076533     SP006431
  Effects of Cued Modelling Procedure and Self-Confrontation in a ...
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../11

```
ED070293      EM010586
  Self-Confrontation via Closed-Circuit Television in Teacher Training :
Results, Implications and Recommendations.


 7/6/6
ED046217      EM008632
  Investigation Into Closed-Circuit Television, Principally as a Component
System of Educational Technology Intended for Integrated Teacher Training.

 7/6/7
ED023314      EM006941
  The Use of Video-Tape Recording and Micro-Teaching Techniques to Improve
Instruction on the Higher Education Level.
?ds 5

Set  Items   Description
S5     291    1  *  4
? S LA=ENGLISH
      S8   224787   LA=ENGLISH
? S PY=1969:PY=1985
Processing
Processing
Processing
      S9   5506878  PY=1969:PY=1985
?C 5  *  8  *  9
Processing
             291   5
          224787   8
          506878   9
     S10      40   5  *  8  *  9
? PR  10/5/ALL
P013: PRINT 10/5/ALL (items 1-40) est. cost of $4.00
? LOGOFF
       04jul85 02:08:05 User078282
    $2.15    0.086 Hrs File1
           $4.00   40 Prints in format 5
    $4.00  1 Print transaction(s)
    $6.15  Estimated cost this file
    $6.15  Estimated total session cose    0.086 Hrs.
```

../12

Appendix IV

Results of Pre-test and Post-test (Quiz No. 1 & 2)

Note: 4 Library Staff who attended the talk did not participate in the quizzes.

All the correct answers where applicable are underlined.

1. Pre-test (Quiz No. 1)

A. I am :

	Score	Note
An IE Academic Staff from SFS	9	
" " " " " SED	13	
" " " " " SSV	4	
" " " " " SAL	11	
An IE Admin. Staff	-	
An IE Student from the Cert. Ed.	-	
" " " " " Dip. Ed.	-	
" " " " " FPCE/FPDE	-	
" " " " " DEA (S&P)	3	
" " " " " M. Ed.	2	----- They are also IE Academic Staff
" " " " " Other Courses	-	
A CDIS Staff	1	
Others	2	
No Answer	3	

B. "ERIC" : IN TODAY'S TOPIC REFERS TO

A Personal Name	-
The Name of a Computer Programme	4
The Name of a Computer (i.e. Hardware)	-
An Acronym for an Information System/ Database	40
None of the Above	-
No Answer	2

C. "ERIC" Search is available in IE Library now

Yes	39
No	5
No Answer	2

D. "ERIC" Search can only be done through a Computer

Yes	20
No	23
No Answer	3

../13

	Score	Note
E. The Educational Resource Information Center is located in		
U.K.	4	
U.S.A.	39	
Australia	-	
Canada	-	
Other Areas	-	
No Answer	3	
F. Have you ever heard of ERIC (Educational Resource Information Center) prior to this quiz?		
Yes	36	
No	9	
No Answer	1	
G. I have used ERIC for Manual Bibliographical Searches		
Yes	19	
No	25	
No Answer	2	
H. I have used ERIC for Bibliographical Searches via the computer		
Yes	7	
No	37	
No Answer	2	
I. From the computer searches that I have done, my grading of the searches is		
Very Satisfactory	3	
Satisfactory	8	
Not Very Satisfactory	2	
Disappointing	1	
Not Applicable	32	

../14

	Score	Note
J. I think ERIC is useful to		
Researchers only	3	
School Administrators only	11	
School Teachers only	1	
All of the above	36	
None of the above	-	
Not sure	2	
No Answer	2	
K. CIJE (Current Index to Journals in Education) Is Not from ERIC		
Yes	13	
No	12	CIJE is published by ERIC
Not Sure	18	
No Answer	3	
L. RIE (Resources in Education) is from ERIC		
Yes	17	RIE is published by ERIC
No	5	
Not Sure	22	
No Answer	3	
M. How many times in the past twelve months have you used ERIC		
Not at all	30	
1 --- 3 Times	9	
4 --- 6 Times	3	
More than 6 times	3	
No Answer	1	
N. EJ No. (e.g. EJ 084 703) can be found in RIE (Resources in Education)		
Yes	4	EJ (Educational Journal) no. can be found in CIJE (Current Index to Journal in Education)
No	3	
Not Sure	35	
No Answer	4	

../15

	Score	Note
O. ED No. (e.g. ED 242 676) can be found in CIJE (Current Index to Journal to Education)		
Yes	16	ED (ERIC Document) no. can be found in RIE (Resource in Education)
No	2	
Not sure	25	
No Answer	3	
P. If there are choices to access ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) Database, I would choose :		
The Computer Search only	5	
The Manual Search only	2	
To do both every time	1	
Either one or both depending on my topics or needs	37	
No Answer	1	
Q. I would only do a computer search provided it is free of charge		
Yes	35	
No	11	
R. If I have to pay for the computer search, I would be willing to pay for it if the search costs:		
Not more than $50	43	
Not more than $100	1	
Not more than $150	1	
Not more than $200	1	
Between $201 to $300	-	
S. I feel that using the computer to do an ERIC Search is		
Very Costly	6	
Costly	11	
Not Costly	3	
Not Sure	25	
No Answer	1	

../16

		Score	Note
T.	I think the computer search is		
	Not reliable	1	
	Reliable	21	
	Very Reliable	10	
	Not Sure	13	
	No Answer	1	
U.	If I were to do a computer search, I prefer :		
	To do it myself	3	
	To sit with the Search Librarian in the course of the search	26	
	The Search Librarian to do it without my presence	13	
	Not Sure	4	

../17

2. Post-Test (Quiz No. 2)

A. I am :

	Score	Note
An IE Academic Staff from SFS	1	
" " " " " SED	6	
" " " " " SSV	2	
" " " " " SAL	3	
An IE Admin. Staff	-	
An IE Student from the Cert. Ed.	-	
" " " " " Dip. Ed.	-	
" " " " " FPCE/FPDE	-	
" " " " " DEA (S&P)	3	
" " " " " M. Ed.	1	----- (He/She is also an IE Academic Staff)
" " " " " Other Courses		
A CDIS Staff	-	
Others		

B. I have answered Quiz No. 1

Yes	15
No	-

C. I would use ERIC for bibliographical searches manually

Yes	12
No	1
No Answer	2

D. I would use ERIC for computer searches if it is possible

Yes	15
No	-

E. From the computer searches that I have done, my Grading of the Searches is

Very Satisfactory	9
Satisfactory	5
Not Very Satisfactory	1
Disappointing	-
Not Applicable	-

../18

	Score	Note
F. I think ERIC is useful to		
Researchers Only	-	
School Administrators Only	-	
School Teachers Only	-	
All of the Above	14	
None of the Above	-	
Not Sure	-	
No Answer	1	
G. How many times in the coming twelve months would you use ERIC via the Computer		
Not at all	-	
1 --- 3 times	8	
4 --- 6 times	3	
More than 6 times	1	
Not sure	3	
H. If there are choices to access ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) Database, I would choose :		
The computer search only	1	
The manual search only	-	
To do both every time	1	
Either one or both depending on My topics or needs	10	
No Answer	3	
I. I would only do a Computer Search provided it is Free of Charge		
Yes	5	
No	10	
J. If I have to pay for the Computer Search, I would be willing to pay for it if the Search Costs:		
Not more than $50	8	
Not more than $100	1	
Not more than $150	-	
Not more than $200	-	
Between $201 to $300	-	
No Answer	6	

../19

	Score
K. I feel that using the computer to do an ERIC Search is	
Very costly	1
Costly	8
Not costly	4
Not sure	-
No answer	10
L. I think the Computer Search is	
Not reliable	-
Reliable	10
Very reliable	5
M. If I were to do a Computer Search, I prefer :	
To do it myself	1
To sit with the Search Librarian in the Course of the Search	13
The search Librarian to do it without my presence	1
Not sure	-

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